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COORDINATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

(Background paper prepared by the United Nations for the twenty-ninth series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination)

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), at its thirty-fifth session (New York, 15 May-9 June 1995), agreed that the theme for the current series of Joint Meetings of CPC and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) should be "Coordination of the activities of the United Nations system for the eradication of poverty". The present background note, prepared by the Secretariat based on inputs from and consultations with organizations of the United Nations system, is intended to stimulate a constructive dialogue on ways and means to enhance the coordinated delivery of United Nations system assistance to Governments in implementing their poverty eradication policies and programmes. Issues addressed here are closely related to those being considered by the General Assembly at its current session with respect to international cooperation in the eradication of poverty in developing countries, the International Year for Poverty Eradication, the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, the coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and the comprehensive policy review of operational activities.

I. SETTING OF POLITICAL PRIORITIES FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM BY CENTRAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES

2. In its broadest and positive sense, coordination should result in a coherent continuum of activities to achieve a common purpose. Indeed, effective collaboration can exist only when there are common purposes, which in turn must be the product of consultations and agreement among the organizations of the system on major priorities and the responses to them. This would require as a sine qua non the setting of political priorities for the system by the central intergovernmental bodies. The United Nations system could then use the overall strategies and approaches thus developed as a framework and operational guide in developing harmonized plans and programmes as well as joint evaluation of the results and of the impact in the field.

3. The required common purpose for the eradication of poverty and the requisite commitment to it by the international community at the highest political level has evolved from recent major United Nations conferences, including the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Fourth World Conference on Women and most notably the World Summit for Social Development, which addressed the eradication of poverty as one of its three major themes. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development both reflect an international consensus on the principles and goals, the commitments undertaken and the actions required to eradicate poverty, and provide the benchmarks against which system-wide activities can be developed and assessed (see A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II). The eradication of poverty has clearly emerged as a key development priority.

4. Heads of State and Government committed themselves, at the Summit, to an improved and strengthened framework for international, regional and subregional cooperation for social development, in a spirit of partnership, through the

United Nations and other multilateral institutions. They accordingly agreed to enlist the support and cooperation of the United Nations system, international development agencies and multilateral development banks to take appropriate and coordinated measures for continuous and sustained progress in attaining the goals and commitments agreed to by the Summit. They also agreed that the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions should establish regular and substantive dialogue, including at the field level, for more effective and efficient coordination of assistance for social development. Governments also decided to adopt the appropriate measures and mechanisms for implementing and monitoring the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, with the assistance, upon request, of the specialized agencies, programmes and regional commissions of the United Nations system, with broad participation of all sectors of civil society. (See A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I, Commitment 10.)

5. Strong emphasis is placed in the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development on the formulation of integrated strategies to eradicate poverty. These strategies should be based on promoting both sustained economic growth, in the context of sustainable development, and social progress, requiring that growth be broadly based and that it offer equal opportunities to all peoples. Governments are urged to integrate goals and targets for combating poverty into overall economic and social policies and planning at the local, national and, where appropriate, regional levels.

6. Each country is requested to develop a precise definition and assessment of absolute poverty, preferably by 1996, at which time the General Assembly will review the effectiveness of the steps taken to implement the outcome of the Summit with regard to the eradication of poverty, as part of the activities relating to the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty. The Programme of Action also recommends that the General Assembly, at its fiftieth session, declare the first United Nations decade for the eradication of poverty, following the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (1996), with a view to its considering further initiatives in this area (A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, para. 95 (c)).

II. ASSESSMENT OF UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM COORDINATION IN THE AREA OF THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

7. The eradication of poverty is a goal that drives the developmental work of the United Nations system and is at the very heart of the mandates of many organizations. It is well recognized that poverty is a complex and multisectoral issue and that it must be addressed by a multiplicity of actors working in concert. Furthermore, poverty has many causes and manifestations, demanding interventions that differ among regions, among countries and even among communities. Consequently, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system are undertaking a wide range of activities targeted at the eradication of poverty. Recently, the ACC Consultative Committee for Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) issued a report on the work of the United Nations system in poverty alleviation (ACC/1995/POQ/CRP.19, annex). The report demonstrates that, while there is no universal solution to the scourge of poverty, there are indeed cases of successful interventions by the United

Nations system that can be replicated. The report has been sent to resident coordinators/resident representatives with the purpose of enhancing United Nations system collaboration at the country level, based on an improved awareness of ongoing work within each organization.

A. Typology of activities

8. CCPOQ classifies the various activities of the United Nations system that target the eradication of poverty into eight categories:

(a) Analytical work. This kind of activity focuses on the problem of the definition and determinants of poverty, the methodology for the assessment of poverty and the development of corresponding indicators. A subject of particular interest over the past decade has been the impact on poverty of the stabilization, structural adjustment, and economic and social reform programmes adopted by a large number of countries with the advice and assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The result of this research has had an important influence on the design and content of more recent adjustment programmes;

(b) Income-generating activities. This work aims to increase the incomes of the poor through employment creation and productivity-enhancing measures, with a focus on sectors in which the poor are concentrated;

(c) Labour-intensive public works. The labour-intensive approach to the production of assets, goods and other services involves the use of working methods and systems that optimize labour content, usually through a cost-effective combination of labour and the use of light equipment;

(d) Access to basic services. Many organizations and bodies of the Untied Nations system are involved in activities to develop or strengthen the access of the poor to basic services, including low-cost safe water, supplies, sanitation and hygiene, primary health-care services and basic education;

(e) Social funds and safety nets. A number of United Nations organizations and bodies are increasingly involved in providing funds and technical assistance to establish various forms of social funds and safety nets to protect vulnerable groups;

(f) Participation of the poor. There is an increasing tendency to introduce a participatory approach in the programmes and projects of several United Nations organizations. In this connection, some agencies regard participation as desirable in its own right and linked to the empowerment of the poor; others view participation as a means to promote economic efficiency and the sustainability of anti-poverty projects;

(g) Targeted efforts towards reducing discrimination. Anti-discrimination activities include the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on discriminatory practices, the establishment of international standards, the improvement of conditions in the labour market and the prevention of child labour;

(h) Monitoring of poverty changes. A number of organizations are involved in either measuring or reporting on poverty and a few are directly involved in poverty-related data collection. At the inter-agency level, the measurement of poverty is undertaken by a task force of the Statistical Commission. In addition, the ACC Subcommittee on Rural Development examines various aspects of poverty-alleviation strategies.

B. Policies and multisectoral strategies

9. The global consensus reached at the World Summit for Social Development provides a framework for the articulation by the United Nations system of broad policies and multisectoral strategies for developing specific anti-poverty programmes. The view is now widespread among the organizations of the United Nations system that the best way of alleviating poverty is to successfully implement a development strategy that pursues sustained economic growth with equity. More equitable growth almost invariably implies more employment-intensive patterns of growth, which increase the demand for labour - the major asset of the poor - and are more equitable. The employment-generating capacity of growth can be enhanced by investing in the more labour-intensive sectors of the economy, especially agriculture; by increasing investments in human capital, i.e., basic education, primary health care, nutrition and population programmes; and by reducing or removing distortions in relative factor prices that arise from a malfunctioning of the labour market or of the market for credit. The sustainability of development is a dimension that has acquired increased importance in this regard.

10. Information obtained from the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system reveals that, within the context of an overall, system-wide effort to eradicate poverty, each organization has developed its own targeted policies and strategies evolving from its unique and specific mandates.

11. Some indeed consider the eradication of poverty to be the very raison d'être of their efforts. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for example, is reorienting its programming activities to target the eradication of poverty as its priority concern, following a decision by its Executive Board in June 1995; thus, all its activities will be geared towards and measured against that ultimate goal. The other major UNDP programming areas - gender equity, the promotion of jobs and sustainable livelihoods, environmental preservation and regeneration, and governance - which together define the UNDP sustainable development framework, will increasingly come under the influence of the eradication of poverty. The World Bank considers its fundamental objective to be to assist countries in reducing poverty and raising living standards. Its poverty reduction strategy encompasses broad-based, labour-demanding economic growth, human resource development and the provision of safety nets for the poor and vulnerable. It defines its assistance to countries through its country assistance strategies, which are formulated through the findings of country-specific poverty analyses, public expenditure reviews and other economic and sector studies.

12. Similarly, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) considers that rural poverty alleviation is its sole mandate and that all its

activities focus on this single goal. Its special programming missions are the analytic mechanism for the articulation of its country policy and investment strategy. The missions, which are meant to provide clear indications of priority target groups and activities for IFAD project assistance within a long-term development strategy for the country, involve a thorough review of the nature and impact of policy instruments affecting the production capacity, employment opportunities, income generation and standards of living of the rural poor. To respond to specific requirements for strategic guidance on national strategy and project development, country strategy studies have been developed as a supplementary mechanism, and serve to assess the significance of implementation issues for both general strategy and project design, and to formulate guidelines for IFAD operations. The World Food Programme (WFP) also indicates that its very mandate is to seek the alleviation of hunger and poverty. It has developed project guidelines that specify the nature and form of its collaboration with other actors in the United Nations system for the preparation and implementation of its projects. It prepares country strategy outlines, which assess the poverty and food insecurity problem, seek to understand the policies and strategies of national Governments in addressing these issues, and examine the relative roles of other agencies, donors and non-governmental organizations. WFP is revising its general regulations to enable it to adopt a programme approach based on country-specific strategies. Country programmes, which would be based on country strategy outlines, would include provisions to ensure that programmes were linked to country strategy notes. The expected advantages of this approach include increased operational flexibility, which could be put to use not only in responding to unforeseen needs for intra-programme changes but also in responding to demands from multi-agency coordination and integration efforts.

13. A number of organizations and bodies of the United Nations system consider that the delivery of basic social services is one of the most effective and cost-efficient ways to combat the worst manifestations of poverty. In the context of the 20/20 initiative, as reflected in the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, basic social services are taken to comprise basic education, primary health care and family-planning services, low-cost water and sanitation services and nutrition programmes. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which focuses the bulk of its operational support and resources on the provision of basic social services for the survival, protection and development of children and women, in line with the outcome of the World Summit for Children, has also espoused the concept of "Adjustment with a human face", encouraging the redesign of adjustment programmes to allow the poor to participate more effectively in the process of economic and social development and to ensure their protection during periods of economic stagnation and fiscal austerity. Of particular importance has been the UNICEF insistence that the debate needed to shift from an excessive focus on the macro-policy framework to the meso level, i.e., the policy instruments that govern the allocation of resources within a given macroeconomic policy framework. These instruments include public expenditure allocation, aid utilization, credit allocation and income and pricing policy. UNICEF's situation analyses of children and women and its national programmes of action provide the programmatic and institutional framework for achieving national goals, and are meant to be consistent with the country strategy notes.

14. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) contributes to the eradication of poverty through the promotion and implementation of population and sustainable development programmes. Its country programmes place a strong emphasis on gender equality and equity in formulating, implementing and evaluating all population programmes. Priority is assigned to the integration of population inputs into broader development policy frameworks, such as the country strategy notes, rolling development plans, structural adjustment programmes and sectoral policy frameworks. The International Labour Organization (ILO) considers that the creation of productive employment is the most effective approach to development, covering, inter alia, the role and needs of women, the provision of social services, income generation and the increased participation of local communities. It fields multidisciplinary advisory teams to different regions and prepares country objective statements, following consultations with the government, employers, workers organizations, United Nations agencies and donors. The World Health Organization (WHO) regards poverty as the leading cause of illness and death in the world, and therefore its work, particularly its technical cooperation with countries, aims at overcoming the root causes of poverty and ill health. A special initiative entitled "Intensified cooperation with countries and peoples in greatest need" aims to enable poor countries to establish equitable and sustainable health systems tailored to their specific needs. Following situation assessments, plans of action are developed and additional resources mobilized through better use of local resources and improved aid management. WHO notes that the UNDP round table and the World Bank consultative group processes have been extensively used to achieve better aid coordination in this regard. It has also established the Global Task Force on Health and Development, which analyses the evolution of health determinants, especially those that are poverty-related, and is actively promoting the development of national health and service monitoring and evaluation in the light of its Health for All strategy. The follow-up of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to the World Summit for Social Development, especially under Commitment 6 of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, will continue to place emphasis on meeting the goals and objectives of the Education for All programme as an integral approach to eradicating illiteracy - a root cause as well as an effect of poverty. The aim of this strategy is to close the gap between literate and illiterate populations and to devise sustainable educational development, with an emphasis on the education of girls and women, particularly in rural areas. UNESCO supports Governments, inter alia, in carrying out country-specific studies on the causes and consequences of poverty, the impact of structural adjustment on the poor, and the effectiveness of anti-poverty strategies. With reference to specific country programmes, UNESCO cooperation with UNDP within the framework of the technical support services (TSS-1) mechanism has progressively addressed the issue of poverty eradication.

15. IMF indicates that its policy advice is increasingly emphasizing the social dimension of adjustment and that it has paid greater attention to social issues in the context of surveillance of members' economic policies, financial support to member countries implementing adjustment programmes and technical assistance. IMF stresses (a) the importance of a high-quality growth strategy, which implies pursuing economic policies that foster macroeconomic stability; (b) implementing structural policies designed to allow market forces to allocate resources and create an enabling environment for private-sector activity; (c) implementing

sound social policies, including social safety nets to protect the poor and vulnerable groups during the adjustment period; and (d) strengthening economic governance. In this context, IMF policy advice emphasizes macroeconomic implications, cost effectiveness and the financial viability of social policy choices. IMF considers that, through policy discussions and technical assistance, it could contribute further to improving the capacity of Governments to monitor social developments and pursue transparent social policies.

16. Several organizations and bodies of the United Nations system strive to achieve the eradication of poverty within the scope of their own sectoral work. For example, activities undertaken for the eradication of poverty by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have been driven since 1979 by the Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. Under its programmes, FAO collaborates with Governments in undertaking the institutional and structural transformations that would facilitate the access of the poor to natural resources, as well as to productive inputs, such as credit. The revised FAO Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development (1996-2001) and its Plan of Action for People's Participation in Rural Development provide the frameworks for increasing the involvement of the rural poor in economic, social and political development. FAO collaborates with United Nations system agencies in fielding joint missions to advise on the adoption of national policies and strategies to ensure the eradication of poverty through growth with equity and people's participation. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) identifies three of its seven priority themes for the 1996-1997 biennium as being focused on eradicating poverty through industrial development: small and medium enterprises; rural industrial development; and the linkage between industry and agriculture, with a focus on Africa and the least developed countries. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) indicates that its development arm, the Telecommunication Development Bureau, could be involved in system-wide work on eradicating poverty through integrated rural development in developing countries, which is a top priority programme for the least developed countries in the Buenos Aires Action Plan for Global Telecommunication Development. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) links the eradication of poverty to environmental sustainability, considering that both have social roots and are interdependent. UNEP aims to promote the assessment and applicability of economic instruments for the sustainable use of natural resources in development projects. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) deals with urban poverty through efforts based on increasing community participation; its work is driven by the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. The Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) focuses on the effect of international economic relations on poverty and has formulated recommendations for international cooperation in such areas as trade and the eradication of poverty. Other bodies, such as the Untied Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), undertake research and/or training in areas related to the eradication of poverty.

17. The work of the regional commissions on the eradication of poverty focuses on a multisectoral approach to the region-specific conditions of poverty. In this connection, it should be noted that both the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development state that the regional commissions, in cooperation with regional intergovernmental organizations and banks, could convene on a biennial basis a meeting at a high political level to evaluate follow-up to the Summit, exchange views and adopt appropriate measures (A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I, Commitment 10 (b) and annex II, para. 95 (h)). It has been suggested that the proposed biennial meeting could establish a set of guiding principles and methodologies for monitoring, including poverty indicators and indices, which could be reported by the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Measurement of Poverty.

18. The information received from the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system reveals the increasing importance being accorded to policies and strategies aimed at the eradication of poverty. Each organization works within the context of its own mandate; there is a variety of action-oriented plans driving poverty eradication activities. Nevertheless, these plans contain policies and measures that are convergent or complementary. Furthermore, there exists an active and vibrant level of inter-agency cooperation in the area, which is most clearly seen in operation at the field level, where a pragmatic and goal-oriented approach to the eradication of poverty is taken.

III. PROGRAMMES AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

19. The national level of implementation and coordination is of key importance for the overall effectiveness of the struggle against poverty. As the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development make abundantly clear, each country must develop its own policies and strategies, and the international community must focus its efforts on supporting country-specific programmes, while at the same time creating a supportive international environment.

20. A number of mechanisms do exist for coordination both horizontally within the United Nations system at the country level and vertically between United Nations system organizations and the relevant government ministries and departments. As part of the process of implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199, the resident coordinator system is being strengthened, the programme approach is being increasingly adopted by the United Nations agencies and country strategy notes are being formulated in interested developing countries. Many countries have established either inter-ministerial or interdepartmental committees, or economic coordination and planning ministries. Similarly, United Nations system field coordination committees have been set up, or at a minimum, regular inter-agency meetings are convened by the resident coordinators in most countries. Thematic groups, including groups dealing with the eradication of poverty, are also being used to coordinate action at the national and local levels.

21. Detailed information on selected case studies of the experience gained in developing and implementing poverty eradication programmes and in coordination at the country level in developing countries at various stages of development will be included in the report of the Secretary-General on the eradication of poverty in developing countries (A/50/396). These examples will serve to indicate the scope and range of activity, and will help to identify the main problems and obstacles to achieving a fully effective and well coordinated response to the challenge of eradicating poverty.

22. To summarize the findings, several conditions need to be met by Governments and United Nations organizations and bodies acting together to achieve positive results. First, it is essential that Governments demonstrate their full political commitment to the goal of eradicating poverty. They must also be willing and able to mobilize and allocate the required domestic financial and human resources for that purpose, and to take the lead in organizing a coordinated response to the challenge of poverty. Second, the strategy to be pursued must be based on growth with equity, the full participation of all actors in development, including civil society, non-governmental and community-based organizations and the poor themselves, and should involve a decentralized approach in which decisions and resources allocation can be made at the local level, taking into account the specific conditions and needs of the target groups or areas.

23. Third, the United Nations system can and must play an advocacy role, provide the necessary financial and technical assistance, and help develop coherent and complementary poverty eradication programmes. Accordingly, it must build the capacity of Governments, where needed, to carry out their leadership and coordinating responsibilities. Fourth, the coordinating mechanisms that now exist - ACC and its subsidiary machinery at Headquarters and the resident coordinator system at the country level - must be used to their fullest to this end. For example, ACC mechanisms should be directed to effectuate a broader approach on the part of United Nations organizations and bodies to eradicating poverty, particularly in the light of the coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences. This would include ensuring that the resident coordinator system be used in assisting in the formulation, in close consultation with Governments, of clear and coherent poverty eradication strategies with specific goals and targets, to be integrated into overall national plans and programmes, as well as in ensuring the coordinated inputs of the United Nations system in the implementation, evaluation and monitoring of such plans and programmes.

24. Fifth, coordination should not be confined to broad strategy and policy formulation but must also aim at achieving a greater compatibility and closer integration of programming approaches and project formulation. This could be effectuated through such means as the development of common definitions of poverty; working together on poverty indicators; common data collection; the identification of target groups and areas; and shared assessment, evaluation and monitoring of results and impact. Joint programming could also be pursued, wherever feasible.

25. Sixth, for the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to come together under a common programming framework, it is necessary for economic and social policy-making not to be disjointed. The relationship between the

United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, on the one hand, and the Bretton Woods institutions on the other, is of key importance in this regard. An integrated poverty agenda can be moved forward if all players cooperate closely not only to develop common approaches, definitions, poverty-assessment indicators and methods of data collection but also to achieve greater complementarity and integration in their economic and social policies, by such means as policy framework papers and country strategy notes.

26. Finally, the critical question of allocating sufficient resources to meet the challenge of eradicating poverty must not be forgotten. Even the best strategies and most highly coordinated programmes cannot be effectively implemented in the absence of the required resources. Determined efforts must be made at the national, regional and international levels to mobilize and reallocate resources to the goal of eradicating poverty. In this regard, the commitments made at major international conferences, in particular the World Summit for Social Development, should be fully adhered to by all countries.

IV. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

27. The present brief overview - of the types of activities being undertaken by the organizations of the system for the eradication of poverty, the multisectoral strategies being pursued and the mechanisms for coordination employed, particularly at the country level - suggests that in their assistance programmes, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system are according the highest priority to the goal of eradicating poverty. It is also evident that considerable progress is being made in achieving better coordination among the poverty eradication activities of the system. The implementation of the various elements of General Assembly resolution 47/199, in particular the strengthening of the resident coordinator system, the development and application of the programme approach, the formulation of the country strategy notes and the constitution of thematic teams or groups, has placed at the disposal of the system the necessary instruments for developing a concerted and well-coordinated response to the challenge of eradicating poverty.

28. In many respects, however, there is a long way to go before the system as a whole can be viewed as pursuing a truly coherent approach to the eradication of poverty. The issues that need to be addressed are evident. First and foremost is the question of ensuring consistency between macroeconomic and social policies, as well as between national policy frameworks and programmes and projects being carried out at the meso and microlevels. Related to this is the need to ensure consistency of approach among the multisectoral strategies being pursued, for example, by the World Bank, UNDP, IFAD, WFP and others. The questions that need to be addressed are what interlinkages or coordinating arrangements exist or are being developed among these strategies and to what effect?

29. Another key dimension in which a coordinated approach is of particular relevance is in the identification of the types of poverty and the target groups that need to be reached. This implies the need to develop common definitions and concepts and common data-collection arrangements to help identify the poor and develop a kind of a poverty map of each country, as well as common

indicators to monitor progress. The poverty eradication initiative launched by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy a few years ago in a number of countries was designed to promote such common actions; considerable progress has been made since then in the countries concerned.

30. Other questions to be addressed are what are the lessons of the experience gained and how can these be applied in other countries and regions? Furthermore, how can such common approaches be extended to involve other organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions?

31. An equally critical element of success is the question of resources: whether the high priority attached to eradicating poverty as both a national and a global objective is reflected in the proportion of resources that is being devoted by countries and by the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to targeted poverty eradication programmes. What are the trends in this respect and what steps need to be adopted, in particular, taking into account the commitments undertaken at the World Summit for Social Development to mobilize and allocate the level of resources required to meet the poverty eradication goals of each country?